

JUSTIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE

Activity: Wildland Fire Management

Program Components	2000 Estimate	Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	2001 Budget Request	Change From 2000 (+/-)
A. Wildland Fire Preparedness	25,157	+786	-4,686	21,257	-3,900
B. Wildland Fire Operations	21,327	0	0	21,327	0
Total Requirements \$(000)	46,484	+786	-4,686	42,584	-3,900

AUTHORIZATION

16 U.S.C. 1, the National Park Service Organic Act. **The National Park Service fire management activities are funded through the Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Management account appropriated to the Bureau of Land Management. This section is included in the NPS Budget Justifications for the purpose of providing information only.**

OVERVIEW

The National Park Service is responsible for fire management of approximately 84 million acres in seven regions and 379 field units. Based on a ten-year average, the NPS annually suppresses 749 wildland fires burning 97,749 acres, manages 73 wildland fires for resource benefits burning 8,552 acres, and conducts 217 planned ignitions on 69,520 acres. The Wildland Fire Management activity is comprised of two program components: (1) Wildland Fire Preparedness supports the readiness and capability of the bureau to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, equipment, fire research, and fire facilities. (2) Wildland Fire Operations comprises wildfire suppression, emergency rehabilitation, and implementing hazardous fuel reduction projects. Wildfire suppression involves the full range of options appropriate for response to wildland fires, including, emergency suppression, immediate rehabilitation, and implementing wildland fire for resource benefits operations. Hazardous fuels reduction includes management of ignited prescribed fire and mechanical fuels reduction.

APPLICABLE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MISSION GOALS

- Ia Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.
- Ib The National Park Service contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.
- IIa Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.
- IIb Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations.
- IIIa Natural and cultural resources are conserved through formal partnership programs.
- IIIb Through partnerships with State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and conservation benefits for the American people.

National Park Service Fire Program

The program goals for the Wildland Fire Management appropriation are:

- To effectively manage and control the use and incidence of fire in units of the National Park System in order to safeguard life, protect property, and promote sound ecosystem management practices.
- To manage all fire program activities related to national, regional, and field unit program oversight, facility construction and rehabilitation, pre-operational staffing and preparedness for wildland fire operations, and planning and implementing fuels management projects.
- To provide operational response costs for unpredictable emergency suppression, and prescribed fire and fuels management incidents.

Performance goals for the National Park Service Fire Program have not been separately developed, but have been developed in concert with the Bureau of Land Management (which manages and administers the program) and other DOI bureaus including, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These goals, which are reflected in the FY 2000 Annual Performance Plans for the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management, are compatible with and supportive of the mission goals of the National Park Service.

Relevant Bureau of Land Management Annual Performance Goals

Reduce threats to public health, safety and property.	In 2001, complete all Fire Management Plans to meet the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review.
	In 2001, the 10-year trend in the number of human caused fires will be descending.
	In 2001, complete 15 steps towards implementation of Interagency Fire SAFE initiative and upgrading 165 facilities.
Restore and maintain the health of the land	In 2001, restore natural ecological processes by increasing fuels treatments (wildland and prescribed) and other land treatment to 1,228,000 acres.

Performance measures for the Wildland Fire Management activities are based on full "Most Efficient Level" (MEL) funding, which represents the most cost-efficient and technically effective fire management program meeting resource objectives and minimizing the cost of suppression and resource losses associated with wildfires. Performance measures incorporated into the Fire Program (FIREPRO) staffing and needs analyses are:

- Ninety-five percent success in initial attack on wildfires in the normal year. The normal year is the third highest occurrence year in the past ten years of record. The success rate for each park is evaluated, and the analysis logic is changed to correct deficiencies, especially deficiencies experienced by parks with similar workload and complexity profiles.
- Adequate permanent staff to provide planning and oversight of all phases of region and park fire management programs. The analysis identifies the type, number and location of permanent staffing needs for program management in both preparedness, and prescribed fire management. It also identifies the type, number and location of seasonal staffing needs for initial attack preparedness, wildland fire for resource benefits monitoring, fire effects monitoring, management-ignited project planning, and other types of mechanical fuel reduction project planning.
- Ability to provide qualified personnel to meet internal incident management requirements for overhead teams.
- Ability to provide aircraft and fire engine support for initial and extended attack wildfire suppression operations.
- Capability to monitor and manage 100 percent of wildland fire for resource benefits with in-park resources during the normal year.

National Park Service Fire Program

- Ability to carry out all hazardous fuel reduction projects ranking above the 25th percentile according to resources-at-risk criteria. These projects are judged to be effective in significantly reducing hazardous fuels and reducing long-term suppression expenditures.
- Ability to carry out all planned ignitions for ecosystem maintenance ranking above the 25th percentile according to ecosystem benefit criteria. These high-ranking projects will significantly contribute to maintaining ecosystem health and preventing hazardous fuel situations from developing. In addition, all projects must pass a statistical cost reasonableness screen. This screen identifies projects that fall statistically within acceptable cost variance and is also applied to mechanical fuels reduction projects.
- Ability to monitor the short and long-term effects of all prescribed fire programs to ensure that goals and objectives are being achieved, and to provide feedback into the adaptive management process.
- Adequate facilities to protect capital equipment and firefighting supplies, personnel, and improve interagency response.

Wildland Fire Preparedness

Wildland Fire Preparedness funds the development and implementation of the wildland fire management programs. Wildland Fire Preparedness involves the readiness and capability to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, and equipment. This activity requires the hiring and training of personnel, prevention activities, provision and maintenance of support facilities, planning and coordination, policy development and oversight, research, interagency coordination and direction, and purchase of and contracting for equipment, supplies, and support.

Wildland Fire Operations

Wildland Fire Operations includes suppression operations, emergency fire rehabilitation, and hazardous fuels reduction operations. Suppression operations include the total spectrum of management actions taken on wildland fires in a safe, cost-effective manner, considering public benefits and values to be protected and consistent with resource objectives and land management plans. Emergency rehabilitation of wildfires is carried out to prevent land degradation and resource damages, and to stabilize erodible soils, structures, or other conditions or damage caused by wildland fires or by actions taken to suppress wildland fires. Hazardous fuels reduction operations involves the development and execution of plans to apply wildland fire to protect, maintain, and enhance resources and to reduce hazardous fuels. This activity includes funding for emergency or extraordinary preparedness as defined in pre-established plans.

The NPS request in FY 2001 for the Wildland Fire Management Fund shows a decrease of \$3,900,000 which reflects 82 percent of the Most Efficient Level.